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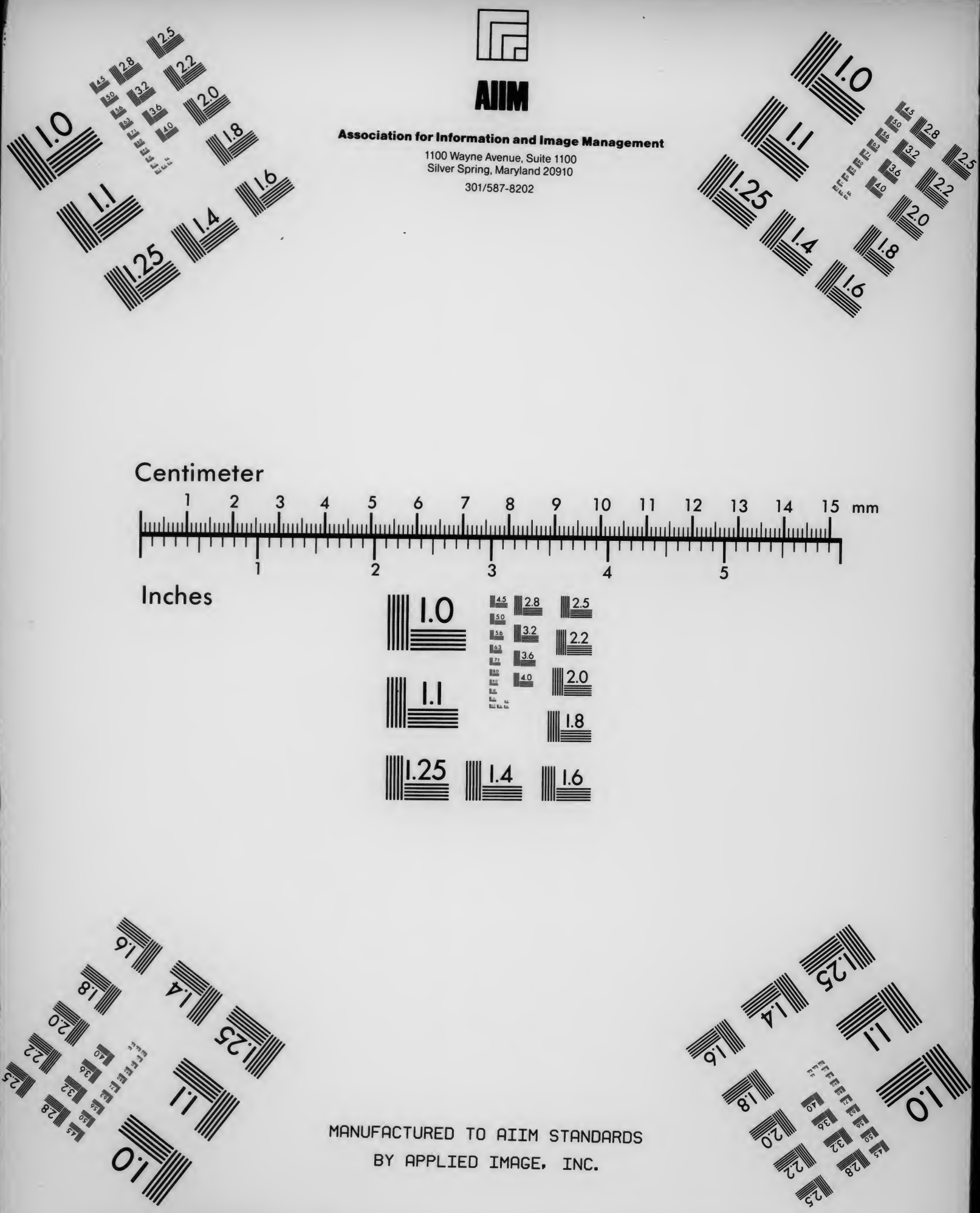
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TWO ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE CHURCH OF HUMANITY LONDON

THE FIRST BY HENRY CROMPTON, ON 17 BICHAT 104 (DECEMBER 18, 1892), THE SECOND BY ALBERT CROMPTON, ON 27 HOMER 113 (FEBRUARY 24, 1901)

All things, whate'er they be,
Have order 'mongst themselves, and this is *Form*,
Which makes the Universe resemble God.

DANTE

THE FIXATION OF FORM

BY

HENRY CROMPTON

The Fixation of Form

A FEW weeks ago I spoke on the subject of development, but from the time at my disposal, very incompletely. I would to-day supplement what I said then by laying before you some thoughts connected therewith, which I might designate as the influence of the past in regard to form. For while the conception of development in our minds is first that of movement onwards—of progression—yet at the same time, however varied the outward circumstances or features may be, there is an ever increasing tendency towards permanence in form. The development fixes itself by its results, by structures or forms that persist. Improvement of an organ follows improvement in function.

I think I am right in saying that our conception of this great process of nature starts from the idea suggested by the word develope, as contrasted with envelope; the unwrapping or unfolding gradually of contents, and bringing out powers, capabilities, beauties, the products of inherent forces duly nourished and stimulated by fitting situation and external conditions. We may take the swelling growth and ripening of a plant, when it 'doth to perfection grow,' from the bud to the blossom and to ripest fruit, as a mental picture of the process of evolution of various kinds. Fruit and

fruition are words of widest signification, alike applicable to all the phenomena of fertile life. The picture is also one of culture or education in the larger sense of the word.

There are those that think that our moral, or even our intellectual faculties, are best left to chance, because, undoubtedly, unwise ignorant restriction in early life is hurtful; but, when the growth is vigorous, it is no more true of our higher nature than of the fruit tree. Left alone, without the social and moral education of organized family life, the child, like the apple tree, tends backwards towards barrenness, degeneration, not to a higher existence. The monstrous depravity of young neglected children is only too common in our great cities. When the means evolved and used for ages for the moral cultivation of the young, is through change of opinion given up, loss must ensue. The danger of changes in religious belief is the weakening of restraints by which society controls the deviations and extravagances of individuals; the weakening also of the sense of the obligations we owe to others, and to the society in which we live; obligations which owe their strength to the moral culture of early life.

The lesson we have to learn is that from the past evolution, arises in the first place the duty, and next the guidance and control, as well as the energy by which we follow the right path. Submission implies strength. A living physician says, 'the weaker the body is the more it commands, the stronger it is the more it obeys;' that is to say, it follows the course marked out by its nature, which is development. The gardener knows how necessary it is to prune the redundant growth of branches and to regulate the nutrition of the tree by cutting the superfluous roots. A systematic art has been created upon the past experience of the facts of tree life, without which the gardener would gather a scanty harvest.

When we speak of limitation and restriction to

the so-called emancipated person of this age, we have to do so cautiously, lest we excite a spirit of revolt and opposition. Yet everything in nature has limits and restrictions. We seek to know them that we may not run tilt against the inevitable; that we may be resigned and know what we are and what we may be. Limitations, no less than the capabilities we possess, issue out of the past and are part of our development. What I wish specially to treat of now is the forms by which we are bound and controlled—forms which Shakespeare happily describes as 'past pressures.' But until the past has produced the form, there must be freedom to expand. When the form or mode of action becomes fixed and definite, liberty consists in each having full scope and opportunity for acting in such manner, for the performance by each of his function in the general economy, as the limitations prescribed by form require. Each of us may represent this to our minds by a different picture, or, in Mr. Galton's language, visualize it differently. I always think of the locomotive's enormous power duly limited to the iron rails, by means of which it is productive of strength and pace.

There are several aspects in which development may be viewed. One is that on which Mr. Herbert Spencer has dwelt so much, and in reference to which he has given us copious illustration. I refer to what he calls differentiation, a word now generally adopted into our language. I prefer the language in which Comte before him expressed the same conclusions.

By differentiation is meant the fact of the various parts of a living structure becoming gradually more unlike, more separated, more distinct in shape, each part more perfectly adapted to perform its special office in the general economy. Mr. Spencer, in the first edition of his well known book on First Principles, enunciated this necessary process as the primary law of development. Later he came round to the Positivist conception, and saw, and candidly acknowledged in his

second edition, that this law of differentiation was not primary but secondary; that if it stopped there, all this improvement and perfection of the parts would be of no avail; that it could not conduce to development of the organism, unless regulated by a still higher law, a primary law holding the various parts together, harmonizing their actions, preventing discord, effecting co-operation—union, unity, continuity.

Development then is the movement to more complete unity, the perfection of parts compatible with the perfection of the whole. Comte expresses this law, by saying that man becomes more and more religious—religion being that unity and harmony which is alone secured by the reign of moral feeling—only truly supreme when systematically and habitually directed to the purest and highest ideals, and, as source or motor power, of devoted energy and active life.

But the differentiation of parts is necessary in the development of the whole. We may look at this truth in another way, express it in other words. Form is the outcome of increasing regularity and perfection. Everything in nature tends to form, to assume some shape or other; it may be solid, fluid, or vapour. Who has not wondered at the shape of the clouds? Whenever a uniform force is applied to or operates upon a shapeless heap or mass of moveable material, form of some kind appears. No doubt the shape of the earth and planets is due to the effect of the forces of the solar system operating through immense periods of time—even snow blown by the wind assumes fantastic shapes, or sand moved and pressed by water. What we call pattern is a form fixed for a time by nature or art—the true conservatism of nature is the tendency of form to become fixed. Persistence of force tends to permanence of form. We have a science of form. We call it geometry—because it arose from the practical measuring of portions of the earth's surface. It teaches us the laws of the invariable forms; it enables us to measure whatever

admits of extended shape. It is the science of extension or space.

As we pass upwards through the scale of the hierarchy of positive sciences, we find the same truth. Movement always takes place in geometrical lines, in accordance with the directions of the forces that produce it. The laws of the movements of the heavenly bodies are expressed in the geometrical language—verbal, or reduced to the more exact expression by the symbols and methods of algebra. The physical sciences all exemplify the truth I am speaking of—gravity or weight, light, its reflection or refraction—even colour is form or form colour; the form arrived at by definite arrangement and concentration of substances.

We all know how colour and effects of colour are obtained by grouping and arrangement, whether of flowers, of dress, or otherwise; the quantity of constituents makes up the colour or quality. Break up or decompose a ray of sun-light by passing it through a prism and you get the solar spectrum, or rainbow, in which colour is subordinated to form and arrangement—a form for ever fixed; and every substance in nature is found to have its special spectrum, even such a substance as blood.

The same is true of heat and sound and the other physical forces, in respect of which movement can only take place in regular and definite modes, whether the motion be without interval, of one form, uniform, or multiform, with innumerable intervals, rythmical and harmonious to our perception. The music of nature is not merely the sighing of trees, the rippling of water, the song of birds, or the moaning of wind, but a universal symphony where sympathy and social feeling stimulate the senses and illumine the understanding. The tendency to the fixing of form is well seen in the passage of substances from one state to another, from the gaseous to the fluid, or from the fluid to the solid. Each substance that crystallizes does so

invariably in the same way, reproducing the same geometrical forms. Examples might be drawn, too, from chemistry, where we learn that some substances have more than one solid form, as the charcoal and the diamond, but each fixed and permanent under definite conditions. There, too, we learn that two or more substances unite together in definite proportions forming a wholly different substance, a compound of different character and appearance.

The best example of form is perhaps to be seen in the life of the simple vegetable or animal cell, and the vast variety of shapes it assumes according to the forces that act upon it, and the uses to which it is put—from perfectly globular to elongated or flat cells; or such curious, yet fixed and permanent conformations as that of the red corpuscles of blood; or the brain cells that are the material seat of the higher faculties of animal life—and the same is true of the higher sciences of sociology and morals—of collective and individual life. Social forces tend to persistent forms, not less, but more, permanent when they admit of adjustment and adaptation to a changeable or variable environment. The weather cock is just as fixed and permanent whether the wind blows from north, south, east, or west. It is employed as a symbol of mutability, but none the less is it most constant and permanent in its true purpose of showing the way the wind blows.

The forms of life are innumerable. It requires more imagination, more of the poetic faculty, than I possess, to give an adequate picture of the varieties of social life. I think of Homer's description of the shield of Achilles. All I can do is to mention as an example the fact of the immense duration of social force in the form of royalty as 'the king.' At the present time the form of political force in many countries has fixed itself in that of the representative assemblies; and persistence not only in the coming together of men in this way, but in the regulations, details, and customs

by which their proceedings are governed, will persist until superseded by some system better adapted to modern civilization. Perhaps I have expressed what I mean in too abstract a way. The subject is very wide and comprehensive, and a discourse like this would be most successful if it induced each of us, in thinking it over, to work out its application and find fresh instances of the truth expounded.

The truth I seek to impress is as wide and comprehensive as nature itself. But the instances we draw from the facts of life, from social and individual life, are of most consequence to us; for only by understanding the persistent and permanent modes and forms can we really systematically mould our life, control our destiny, and hasten the natural evolution.

Our laws, I use the term in its legal or legislative sense, should be the outcome of social development, the accurate statement of customs that have grown up, which, by having the sanction of respected authority, are made still more binding upon the individual. Wise laws so based, serve both to protect liberty and to make authority respected. I cite such an instance as the well known valuable rule of English law, founded on true sentiment and tradition, that every man's house is his castle; a maxim insuring each citizen from intrusion by strangers and from domiciliary visits; throwing a sanctity round the home which may not be violated even by the authority of State officials, except for urgent necessity, like grave crime, and even then not without careful limitation and precaution.

These practical laws when so founded tend to be permanent acquisitions of the race. Still more firmly established are the great rules of moral life: such as that of truth, that it is base and wrong to tell a lie; or that which renders inviolable and consecrates a promise made to one or to a thousand. These are moral laws as certain and inevitable as are the physical laws which regulate the universe, and they will endure

as long as the human race, for they are some of its highest prerogatives.

The Latin word *mores* signifies manners as well as morals, and these are a very important part of civilized life. There is a leaning on the part of many persons in this age of revolution and transition, to disregard the forms which arose in the past, modifying and regulating the intercourse of men together. The changes in belief, the political turmoil, the alteration in position, the levelling up or down, the rise to position by means of wealth, the notion of absolute equality, all tend to the disregard of manners and to weaken the feeling of respect among us.

But real liberty is expressed by manners. We are too apt to conceive of liberty in connexion with state authority, as being free from the prison or the handcuffs, whereas it consists much more in the proper adjustment and regulation of men's actions, in the easy movement of the human particles in society without friction or damage from each other. Manners, consideration, and polite behaviour are the true means of preserving liberty and assuring respect to each man or woman, to the weak as well as the strong; the respect which is due to all qualities rightly used, to every member of the human race, and to its dependents. I do not think we can exaggerate the immense value of manners, even in the more special sense of daily intercourse among men, leading to the softening of asperities, to the increase of gentleness and tenderness, the consideration of others, the charm of social existence.

It is true that manners and politeness may be superficial and insincere: even the cloak of guile and fraud. But what of that? So may the appearance of blunt honesty be made the cloak of knavery. Shakespeare speaks of the 'proper false' making an impress on the waxen heart. Othello says of Iago 'this fellow's of exceeding honesty.'

There can be no doubt that when form is rejected

the feeling which it expresses loses in strength. It is freely admitted by Americans that they have lost much that is valuable by disregarding some of the forms of English social life. It is especially noticed in the demeanour of our courts of justice and the respect felt for them here, as contrasted with their own. Ceremonial and symbols have a very powerful effect—they re-act potently upon feeling. They are not to be undervalued because at times some of those who use them are insincere, or because a symbol may become obsolete and represent nothing. At all events we ought not to fall into the poor mistake of discarding that which has been and is of infinite use, because it is liable to be abused, or because in certain defective natures the form may be severed from the substance. Even then, they represent and enforce submission to a collective will, an agreement and co-operation with others. Even the trivial acts required by social intercourse and politeness are of real value. I fancy women estimate them at a higher value than men—seeing more clearly the protection and safety they afford to the weak. The importance of manners from a worldly point of view, and as a means of social success and advancement, has been admirably shewn by Lord Chesterfield in his celebrated letters—they are well worth reading, notwithstanding their being worldly wise, instead of raised upon a lofty morality and true estimate of human nature.

Feeling and its form, that is to say its outward manifestation, cannot really be separated. To be effective as a motor power in society, and not purely egoistic, feeling must find an outlet and mode of communication. It cannot do so otherwise than by the fixed forms, which, whether by words, sounds, or gestures, constitute language—fixed forms whose source is feeling. 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,' is true, that is the letter without the spirit, but it is also true that the spirit gives life to the letter and animates the form. The spirit, as St. Paul calls it, can

only be manifest and give life to others through the letter.

The tendency of living things towards variation induced by internal or external causes, of which Darwin has made so much, Comte long before had shown to be the explanation of development (see the last chapter of the second volume of his *System of Pos. Pol.*) This is only so for the race, when the variation by transmission from parent to offspring becomes a permanent improvement of the species. Then such acquisitions become so fixed as to offer stout resistance to external influences and to persist in spite of opposition and persecution.

This is not merely true of vegetables and animals, but of our social and moral lives. We rely on the permanence of the moral foundations of social life and conduct. We seek to strengthen and render permanently supreme the social sympathies; the attachment of equals, the veneration for capacity, merit, and service due, the love or benevolence for all. That is the noble purpose of Positivism for which we assemble here, for which we are resolved to try to build our Church.

Our chief object is not to teach or instruct, but to cultivate and develope the higher feelings and the higher life, by fixing firmly and irrevocably both feeling and life, by concentrating them now and for ever upon the Humanity of which we are part, in whose service we are proud to labour. We are confident that in the future, whether any one of us is known to posterity or not, even if our little assembly be never heard of in the distant future, we are confident that the judgment of Humanity will one day declare that those did right and well who refused to allow themselves to be drawn aside by the seductions that now surround us, political, artistic, commercial, or charitable, but put their whole force to that which is of primary importance to human welfare, by the side of which all other occupations and efforts sink into insignificance—I mean the moral government

of the world. This cannot be commercial or political; it must be religious and be brought about by the direct and systematic worship of Humanity.

One of the great Greek poets says

> 'Better far than towers,
> Are altars, yea, a shield impenetrable.'

HENRY CROMPTON

FORM

BY

ALBERT CROMPTON

Form

WHEN Beatrice leads Dante up into heaven her first instruction to him is couched in these remarkable words :—

> 'All things, whate'er they be,
> Have order 'mongst themselves, and this is *Form*,
> Which makes the Universe resemble God.'

or, as we might translate it into the language of Positivism—

> 'All things, whate'er they be,
> Have order 'mongst themselves, and this is *Form*,
> Which binds the world unto Humanity.'

The human mind shapes and brings into form the various impressions it receives from the senses according to their natural order, and so connects all with Humanity—sums up indeed all in Humanity—for Humanity condenses in herself the external as well as the human order. It is through her eyes that we see the earth, her dwelling place, and all its beauties, and the order of the heavens—sun, moon, and stars—her mind has created for us the space illimitable wherein our fancies are free to rove.

'Form' then is the result of the active exercise of man's synthetic powers, his intellectual and affective faculties ; let us say, the power of his intellect works under

the inspiration of his heart and the product is form. Under the inspiration of feeling, man's senses drink in impressions from the world without, which stamp themselves on the brain within and are there transformed or transfigured by the power of his genius into shapes or forms the most exquisite. The inspiration of the heart is essential, or the form will be imperfect and uncouth.

If we were to revert to the theological expression, we might say that 'Form' was equivalent to creation. It is the result wrought by the spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. Prior to that the earth was without form. A world was revealed where chaos was; or, as it is put in other words by one of our great English poets:—

> 'So Love, emergent out of Chaos, brought
> A world to light;
> And, gently moving o'er the waters, wrought
> All form to sight.'

Let us try for a few moments this morning to realize 'Form' in its highest and most complete manifestation, and consider the form Humanity herself takes as she is revealed to us through the impressions left by our senses on our brain, acting under the inspiration of our hearts, remembering always that we are bound to no slavish reproduction of the external, but are free to modify and improve, so long as we do not thereby conflict with reality.

Such a topic as this, the 'form' of Humanity, will, perhaps, shew us more clearly than any other point of view the sacredness of 'Form,' will teach us that 'Form' is the object towards which all the best efforts of our hearts and minds are constantly working from birth to death; teach us, too, how careful we must be in our efforts after form, never contenting ourselves with anything coarse or mean or monstrous, never with any form that is false or untrue, false to our knowledge or untrue to our real feeling, for the form which belies

our true self, even from the intellectual side, far more if it misrepresents our feeling, is not in truth 'form' at all—it is deformity.

This is why we attach, and rightly attach, so high a value to spontaneity in our formations or creations—that they may flow from our souls as the brook from the hillside. Still, remember that the feeling which is uppermost at any given moment is not always our true feeling, nor should we be justified in giving form to a transient emotion of hatred or greed—under an idea of sincerity. Such emotions do not represent our true self, and their repression is right—it tends to allow the true self to reassert itself and to express itself under a very different form.

With this explanation we may say unreservedly that form must be real, it must express the real feelings and thoughts of him who gives it birth.

I shall preface what I propose to say this morning by two quotations which seem to me to sum up the subject. The first from A'Kempis; the second from Wordsworth. And I quote from Wordsworth with the more readiness, as I always love to associate him and his writings with that influence which must always reign supreme in this place, the influence which, perhaps, is hardly less strong on those who come here only at rare intervals than on those who come here Sunday after Sunday. To me, at least, it is a real and vivid presence. 'After Shakespeare and Milton, what English poet will you put before Wordsworth?' Dr. Congreve once said to me.

The passage from A'Kempis is as follows:—

> 'He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy a quiet mind and remain at peace.' (*Imitation*, I, 3.)

And that from Wordsworth reads thus:—

> 'Far as kindly nature hath free scope,
> And reason's sway predominates, even so far
> Country, society, and time itself partake
> Of one *maternal* spirit.' (*Excursion*, Bk. ix.)

You will see in these noble words how the poet endeavours to bring all his conceptions of the world and man into unity, and how the *form*, into which his brain casts everything, that which makes all one, is *maternal.*

What he calls the maternal spirit, that which he perceives to animate country, society, and time itself, we are taught to call Humanity—even the sum of all convergent human effort through the ages, and the unerring instinct of the poet coincides here with the elaboration of the philosopher in seeing that the form taken by what the poet calls 'the spirit,' what we should call the 'energy' of the race, must be maternal.

To unify all human love, all human knowledge, all human power, must ever be the highest effort of the human brain, whether of poet or philosopher, so summing up no less the external order than the order of man's world. To put all this into the form which shall for ever and ever satisfy man's highest thoughts and deepest feelings—surely this is the supreme effort of human intelligence. Sacred the instrument which can so generalize, so systematize, and then, as it were, spontaneously bring to birth such a creation, such a 'form.' Sacred, too, above all sacred to us, is the form so produced.

Let us look a little more closely at this form. What is this maternal spirit of which Wordsworth speaks? The maternal spirit is that which resides in mothers, and is seen to assert itself more conspicuously in mothers than anywhere else. This is a spirit or quality with which we are all to our great happiness very familiar. But we must not say that it is a quality which is a necessary consequence of physical maternity. It may be found more developed in some who have never brought forth children than in others who have done so. How many a poor, unwedded woman, lonely and deserted, has felt keenly surging within her heart this truly human spirit of maternity. But it is a quality

which physical maternity and the care of the young tends to draw out in many, very many, instances. And so, wherever we see it, we call it maternal; spontaneously we associate it with the fact of maternity.

Than this quality we know none truer, none nobler, or more beautiful. It combines the action of all the social feelings—benevolence no doubt mainly, but hardly less attachment and veneration, for where can we find a true mother whose heart is not filled with something of awe for the mysterious little creature entrusted to her care? And we note how vigorously it stimulates the active qualities when the young of some animal is threatened.

Therefore, when Wordsworth tells us that country and society partake of one maternal spirit, he means to say that he finds there all he knows as truest, noblest, and most beautiful. Of course countries and societies are sometimes led astray and shew other qualities which we deplore. But that is their imperfection, the imperfection which they share with everything of which we have positive knowledge. There still remains the fact that, amid all these deplorable divagations, there subsists something of that which we know as most beautiful—something of the maternal.

Now the function of religion is to reduce all things to one form—the most perfect and beautiful form possible—and to exhibit this 'form' for the admiration and love of its worshippers, that so they may discipline their lives rather by filling their souls with love of the beautiful than by repressive action. For love is the essence of true religion, and by love men are more firmly united together than by any other means whatever, and we must love that best whose form is the most beautiful. This shows us clearly how all important is the form taken by that unity towards which we all look.

Now, as this form is to be maternal, the result of its adoration must be to give to all a better chance of themselves growing in its likeness, of developing in

themselves something of the maternal quality, so that individuals and families, cities and countries, may gradually grow more and more in the likeness of this great mother.

First of all this form resides within us. It is pictured on our brains, or let us rather say, the mother's image dwells within our hearts. The image enshrined there is the product of all we have ever learnt about the maternal spirit Wordsworth has noted to exist in all forms of human association.

And we may fashion her, form her—in truth we cannot help so forming her—in the likeness of our own human Saints, of those who have in the first instance taught us in what maternity consists. Very, very sacred then the form becomes here, as we picture, each one for a moment to ourselves, these holy ones who represent the highest. For these human Saints are those our best beloved—those with whom we have lived—who have shared life's joys and sorrows with us. Perhaps we have knelt at their knees, perhaps we have knelt beside them, perhaps they have given us birth, or given birth to our children. Let their special relationship to us take what shape it may, these are they who give form to the perfect Mother and help us to conceive of her whose tenderness and purity are unrivalled.

But however lovely, however beloved, the image we evoke, we must remember that this Mother who must dwell enshrined in the heart of every true worshipper of Humanity is but the feeble reflection of the reality, the perfect mother whose existence is outside each one, and yet has no existence save in the lives of her children. She it is who has lived on this her planet through the past ages, whose presence is found everywhere where man lives on the earth to-day, whose being will endure so long as man endures.

She is that of which the Mother in the hearts of each one is but the type or representation. She is Humanity herself.

The truth of this subjective reality should not prove too hard for us to grasp.

We all know the shape of the land in which we live. It has been familiar to us from our childhood from the maps which we have seen; and those of us who have been by the seashore may have even tested by eyesight in the sweep of some bay or the bold outline of some headland the accuracy of the map in this particular. But no one has ever yet seen, or ever can see the whole of England at a glance. It is a reality unquestionably existing outside of us, but we have only seen it by means of some lines and colours on a piece of flat paper, the rest is the work of our mind. Much in the same way we become conscious of the existence of Humanity as a whole.

The picture which we make, or the form which Humanity takes within us, is based upon our experience of her manifestations in the world, an experience transformed into wisdom under the quickening breath of love.

But even when exalted to the highest effort, our minds can reach but a little way to realize that Being. Think of the infinity of brave and loving and wise lives, which have struggled, striven, and suffered in all lands, generation after generation.

We look abroad with wonder at the host of lights which shine some clear night above our heads in the Heavens. We know that the most powerful telescope only serves to reveal other more distant and more distant worlds, and our hearts swell with wonder; but what telescope can serve us to reveal the myriads and myriads of human lives that have passed away without leaving even their names behind them. All have disappeared to view, save a very few which shine forth so conspicuous that their names survive, even as the brightest constellations amongst the host of stars hardly known to the astronomer himself. If the earth could only give up her dead, what a sight it would be? But that cannot be, for she holds them too closely in her loving embrace.

Yet these myriads and myriads of the loving ones who have lived and died, all go to make up the reality of perfect maternity, which upholds and guides us, and they join hands through the present with those other lives yet to come, which are concealed from us in the mists of the future, but are none the less real. They are there waiting for their cue to appear upon the scene, hidden from us, but assuredly not less bright or glorious than those who have departed.

Such considerations of the form and glory of the object of Positivist worship are, I doubt not, familiar to all of you, but let us consider the same subject from another standpoint. Let us see how, from the reverent contemplation of the family, we may attain to a more definite conception of the form necessarily taken by the true Supreme Being.

A family, we know, is a social organism, though the most simple social organism. It is not, that is, a mere collection of individuals taken at random, but it consists of members each with a special individual function, all united principally by the love each bears for the family as a whole. The members must differ in sex, in age, and in functions. The complete family must reckon three generations—even in those cases where it is a simple family without the compounded element of domesticity. These three generations represent the past, the present, and the future. In the father and mother the active life is centred ; by them the present is represented. It is their function by their active labours (the man without and the woman within the home) to support the lives of their parents as long as they live, and their children until they come to maturity. The grandparents represent the past ; they aid by their experience and breadth of view. The children, who constitute the element of the future, provide an object to work for, which ministers to hope. The life of the family is carried on by the united efforts of all. Take away any part and the whole

becomes maimed and deficient. But, highly organized as it is, the family still remains, as I said, the simplest form of human association or of a social organism. It is spontaneous, that is, it springs up of its own accord wherever there are men and women ; it even exists, as you know, in germ among the higher animal races. Compare it with the higher forms of social organisms, the city or the nation, and its greater simplicity becomes at once apparent. It is because the family is an object so familiar to everyone that it has been chosen as the type of social organisms. We talk of brotherhoods of men ; religious language speaks of fellow believers as brethren. The phrase of the different 'families' of the animal kingdom is a very common one, and Humanity herself we often hear termed the human brotherhood or the great human family.

We have all some experience of family life, and I think most of us would agree as to what constitutes its centre. Never yet was a picture drawn of a holy family in which the mother and child did not occupy the central portion. Other figures may be included to complete the picture, but the idea of family is certainly best conveyed under a form in which the maternal spirit, as Wordsworth terms it, is predominant.

Yet the family life unquestionably calls out at its best—and we need not consider its worst—all the human virtues, if not to the full extent demanded by public life, yet what virtue can be named which has not its origin at home?

How then can we hope to find expression for the life of *the whole*, the life to which all families minister, if they are healthy social organs, better than under the form of the Supreme Mother, and as we must make their representation as simple as possible, it is confined to two figures—perhaps we may say two in one—the mother and babe. The very simplicity of the representation reminds us of the supreme truth that Humanity is self-sustaining and self-renewing, that she is spouseless and alone.

We may then take the family, the first and dearest, the most spontaneous creation of Humanity, as a means of justifying, if not of arriving at, the form under which we shall conceive of the true Supreme Being by whom our destinies are shapen. The family is but the microcosm, or little world, the first attempt to delineate the great life of Humanity; it is the tiny drop of water wherein we can, though in miniature, discern her reflection.

So far I have endeavoured to lay before you some solid grounds for justification of the 'form' under which the believer in Humanity strives to realize the Supreme Being, some conception also of the importance to be attached to this form of which we may sometimes be apt to be a little impatient. May I detain you a few moments longer to say a word on the urgent need there is for us all to feed upon the form of this, the true, the universal Mother, so that we may to some extent project the ideal within on the world outside, and however humbly, help on its realization there? We are surrounded by dangers, and we need all the help we can get to avoid them. There are dangers, so to speak, in the very air we breathe, dangers favoured by the environment. It is a current superstition, and one the more insidious because it is one on which we act rather than admit it as theoretically true, that form is a matter unimportant, that whatever shape our faith takes we may all work together to a good end. No heresy is more misleading. I shall take but one illustration to explain my meaning and as proof of its truth.

In the absence of worship, and I mean here by worship the conscious and avowed worship of Humanity in public and private as our Master has bequeathed it to us, in the absence of the formal worship of the highest, theology having lost the social purpose which alone masked its inherent selfishness, the nations of the West have taken up with the idolatry of material force. They

have adopted a hideous *deformity* as their ideal. The origin of this superstition must, I fear, be ascribed to that portion of the population to which has been entrusted its spiritual and temporal leadership, the upper and middle classes; but the mischief has spread only too rapidly among the masses. To what frightful ends such worship may be turned when an unscrupulous and ignorant dictator combines his power with that of a parasitical press and a hireling clergy has been only too apparent during the last eighteen months of our national history.

The instinct of destruction is naturally stronger within all of us than that of construction, and pandered to as it has been it soon runs riot in our natures. It may be that we shall soon be surfeited by the very excess of our national debauch; but what is our safeguard against a speedy return of the same spirit? I know of none save in the growth of true social feeling and of that higher ideal which can only be fostered by the worship of Humanity under the form, as revealed by our Master, of the mother and child.

But this fostering of social feeling by human worship must have a solid basis, and this brings us to the very important question of the 'form' of man's industry in the future, because it is an article of the positive faith that, though fostered by human worship, social feeling must be grounded in *Interest* and harmonized with its promptings. Without entering in detail upon this large subject I may remind you that personal interest is made subservient to the purposes of social feeling by the transformation of human labour from an individual to a collective form. As human associations increase in size, and the form of industrial undertakings increases both in volume and duration, men are gradually forced, even by their ambition, to make use of collective labour for social purposes (and such labour is the only true 'industry') rather than to acts of collective hostility between nations and races.

We need industry as the basis of social life, but industry can never succeed in ousting a retrograde tendency to war unless fortified by the establishment of the direct worship of Humanity.

In conclusion I will read you the truly prophetic utterance of the great Italian poet and artist pointing out to us the triumph of Humanity under a maternal form:

'In every place may I behold thee, Mother;
Before my path set up thy light alone;
All fire but thine within my heart be quenched,
And may thy love enwrap me as a flame.
Mother, I call on thee, on thee alone,
O bid my striving spirit rest in thee;
Let thy soft charity renew my heart,
My will, my thought, my poor and failing strength.
Thou hast appointed to my soul her place,
And in the body's frail and feeble vesture,
Thou hast ordained her destiny divine;
By thee she lives, thou dost sustain and guard her.
Without thee, Mother, all is lost to her;
O thou divine one, be her refuge still!'

ALBERT CROMPTON

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